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*President of the Senate*

## THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE



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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **FLORIDA SENATE & HOUSE EXPRESS PROFOUND REGRET FOR SLAVERY**

TALLAHASSEE—The Florida House and Senate today approved a resolution expressing profound regret for the involuntary servitude of Africans and called for reconciliation among all Floridians.

The text of the resolution follows:

#### **Senate Concurrent Resolution**

**A concurrent resolution expressing profound regret for the involuntary servitude of Africans and calling for reconciliation among all Floridians.**

WHEREAS, African slavery was sanctioned and enforced through laws enacted by Florida's first Territorial Legislative Council in 1822, and

WHEREAS, the Council and its successors did, over four decades, construct a legal framework that perpetuated African slavery in one of its most brutal and dehumanizing forms, and

WHEREAS, this legal framework included such lawful punishments as the following:  
"That any negro or other slave duly convicted of robbery...or burglary shall suffer death or have his or her ears nailed to posts and there stand for one hour and receive 30 lashes on his or her bare back at the discretion of the court," and

WHEREAS, in 1827, free Africans were denied the right to vote and in later years were, by law, so repressed, restricted, and harassed that by 1850 most had been driven from Florida, and

WHEREAS, African slavery was entrenched within the plantation culture of Middle Florida to such a degree that by the year 1860, 73 percent of the total population of Leon County were slaves, and

WHEREAS, there were early political leaders in Florida who advocated a vigorous defense of slavery, and

WHEREAS, the Florida Legislature has identified grave injustices inflicted upon African slaves and freemen by the state, and

WHEREAS, even though the laws permitting such injustices have been repealed, it is important that the Legislature express profound regret for the shameful chapter in this state's history and, in so doing, promote healing and reconciliation among all Floridians, NOW,  
THEREFORE,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida, the House of Representatives Concurring:

That the Legislature expresses its profound regret for Florida's role in sanctioning and perpetuating involuntary servitude upon generations of African slaves.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature calls for healing and reconciliation among all residents of the state.